

**Standard USHC-8:** The student will demonstrate an understanding of the impact of World War II on United States' foreign and domestic policies.

**USHC-8.2** Summarize and illustrate on a timeline the major events and leaders of World War II, including the battle of the Bulge and major battles at Midway, Normandy, Iwo Jima and Okinawa; turning points for the Allies; dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki; and roles of Roosevelt, Churchill, and deGaulle. (H)

**Taxonomy Level:** 2 B Understand/ Conceptual Knowledge

**Previous/future knowledge:**

In the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, students explained the principal events related to the United States' involvement in World War II—including the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the invasion in Normandy, Pacific island hopping, the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—and the role of key figures in this involvement such as Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Joseph Stalin, and Adolf Hitler (5-4.4). Students summarized key developments in technology, aviation, weaponry, and communication and explained their effect on World War II and the economy of the United States (5-4.6).

In the 7th grade, students explained the causes, key events, and outcomes of World War II, including ...the major turning points of the war and the principal theaters of conflict; the importance of geographic factors; the roles of political leaders; and the human costs and impact of the war both on civilizations and on soldiers (7-5.5).

In Global Studies, students explained the causes, key events, and outcomes of World War II., including ...the major turning points of the War and the principal theaters of conflict; the importance of geographic factors during the War; and the political leaders during the time (GS-5.4).

**It is essential for the students to know:**

An understanding of the **timeline** of major events during World War II is vital to comprehending the war itself and the postwar tension that developed between the wartime allies, the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USHC 9.2). Allied leaders, Winston **Churchill** of Great Britain, Franklin Delano **Roosevelt** of the United States, Joseph Stalin of the Soviet Union and Charles **DeGaulle** of the free French, met throughout the war to plan strategy and to make post-war plans.

Students should understand the critical role of the major battles in the European Theater, such as Operation Torch, Stalingrad, D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge. They should also understand that the Soviet Union, taking the brunt of German aggression in 1941-1944, desperately wanted the other Allies to open a second front in Europe. Its delay increased tensions between the allies. The first invasion of North Africa [Operation Torch] was to free the Mediterranean Sea from German control, protect the oil fields of the Middle East and to take some pressure off of the USSR. The Soviet's resistance at Stalingrad turned the tide on the eastern front. Allied landings in Italy brought its surrender but German forces continued the bitter fight on the Italian peninsula. The invasion of **Normandy** on D-Day finally provided the long awaited western front. The **Battle of the Bulge** was the last German offensive and the beginning of the end for the Nazis. American, British and French forces marched towards Berlin from the west as the Soviets moved toward Berlin from the east, laying the foundation for the post-war division of Berlin and Germany and Cold War tensions there.

Battles in the Pacific theater, such as **Midway**, **Iwo Jima**, and **Okinawa** demonstrate the United States' strategy of island-hopping to get close enough to the Japanese home islands to launch air attacks. Each of these battles represents a major turning point in the Pacific theater. The unexpected naval victory at **Midway** stopped the Japanese advance and put them on the defense. **Iwo Jima** was needed as a base for

the Allied heavy bombers and **Okinawa** was the last major island needed before the invasion of the home islands of Japan. Battles for these islands demonstrated the tenacity of Japanese soldiers and the cost in American lives that any invasion of the Japanese home islands would entail. They explain why the United States was determined to have the Soviet Union help in the Pacific theater and why the Soviets occupied northern Korea at the end of the war. The decision to drop the atomic bombs on **Hiroshima and Nagasaki** was designed to prevent the necessity for landing and fighting on the Japanese home islands and consequently prevent large numbers of American casualties. As a result, the Japanese surrendered unconditionally before American troops landed on their home islands.

**It is not essential for the students to know:**

Other specific battles such as the retreat from Dunkirk, the Battle of Britain, or the landings at Palermo are not essential. Students do not need to remember specific events such as Doolittle's Raid. Specific tactics of the German subs or the scorched earth policy or special groups, such as the 101st Airborne division, do not need to be remembered. It is not necessary for students to be able to recall the names of the specific conferences held by the allied leaders such as Casablanca, Teheran, Yalta or Potsdam nor the specific decisions that were made at each meeting. The details of the Manhattan Project are not essential to understand the strategy of dropping the two bombs. The theory that the atomic bombs were dropped as a warning to the Soviet Union and the first shots of the Cold War need not be discussed.

**Assessment guidelines:**

Appropriate assessments would require students to be able to **summarize** the progress of the war effort and the impact of wartime decisions on the relationship of the allies. They should be able to **classify** events as belonging to the war effort in the Pacific or European theaters. Students should also be able to **compare** the strategies and outcome of World War II to those of World War I and to **infer** the impact of those strategies on the post-war tension between the United States and the Soviet Union. They should be able to **interpret** maps and graphs and **infer** their relationship to information about the time period.